

Book Review

Edited by Andrew Shryock: *Islamophobia / Islamophilia, beyond the politics of Enemies and Friends*

2010; Indiana University Press, reviewed by Syed Ali Abbas

Price £16/99

The book contains four parts, (1) Continuities and Transformations, with two papers: Western Hostility towards Muslims: A History of the Present by Tomaz Mastnak and (2) The Khalil Gibran International Academy: Diasporic Confrontation with an Emerging Islamophobia by Naamah Paley. Part Two Modern (Self) Criticism with three papers (1) The God that Failed: The Neo-Orientalism of Today's Muslim Commentators by Moustafa Bayoumi, (2) Gendering Islamophobia and Islamophilia: The case of Shi'i Muslim Women in Lebanon by Lara Deeb (3) Bridging Traditions; Madrasas and Their Internal Critics by Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Part three: Violence and Conversions in Europe with two papers only (1) The Fantasy and Violence of Religious Imagination: Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism in France and North Africa by Paul A. Seilverstien and (2) German Converts to Islam and their Ambivalent Relations with Immigrant Muslims by Esra Ozyurek . Part four containing two papers; (1) Muslim Ethnic Comedy: Inversions of Islamophobia by Mucahit Bilici (2) and Competing for Muslims: New Strategies for Urban Renewal in Detroit by Sally Howell. This detail of the contents is besides an introduction by Andrew Shryock himself under caption: Islam as an Object of Fear and Affection.

Western interest in Islam is not a recent development. And yet all along the history their writings focus had been on what the Muslims did branding it in the name of Islam, irrespective of the fact that what the Christian kings, monarchs and the popes in the churches did was not recognized as the vices of Christianity. "The Divine Message", Islam pleads, "is nothing but virtue and enlightenment for the people to follow with faith and devotion". No Divine religion whether Islam, Christianity, or Judaism are immuned of Divine Spirit except that which is corrupted by its followers.

As a student of History I have had an opportunity to monitor criticism against Islam, particularly of the 19th century, besides the present wave of Islamophobia, recently developed in the West. I deem it as somewhat parallel to the reaction which occurred during the large scales conversion from Hindus to Islam – a process which continued for more than six to seven centuries despite the reformist movements of Rama Nanda and Bhagat Kabir etc. and the later reactionary movements of Arya Samaj, Dev Samaj and other anti movements against Muslims. Even that, as at present, criticism against Islam was picked up by people who had little or stray knowledge of Islam and it is also true of all the contributors to this book, who have taken to blow up the anti-Islamic basis grown over the years fast conversion to Islam.

The editor of the book has introduced the contributors (P.237) who are mostly Anthropologists, besides a professor of English, another of Sociology, another of History (The Arab World), another of Philosophy etc. Andrew Shryock (from Israel) is himself a Professor of Anthropology in the University of Michigan (USA) who introduces Islamophobia and Islamophilia with serious questions (P. 5). The questions are reflected of a preceding statement. He observes, "Note how Muslim are depicted as a collective body that is (or ought to be) responsible for the misdeeds of its criminal element, who have transformed the faith into an ideology ... In 2006, for instance, a collective of

permanent literary type produced a public statement "Together facing the "New Totalitarianism" in which a force called "Islamism" is linked to "Facism, Nazism, and Stalinism." Islamism is never clearly defined in the document; it is portrayed as a dark ideology born out of fear, frustration and hatred" (P.5). He raises questions: according to him:

- (i). Islamism is a reactionary ideology that kills equality, freedom and secularism wherever it is present.
- (ii). Its victory can only lead to a world of injustice and domination of men over women, fundamentalists over other;
- (iii). On the contrary, we must ensure access to universal rights for the oppressed or those discriminated against;
- (iv). We reject the "cultural relativism" which implies an acceptance that men and women of Muslim culture are deprived of the rights to equality, freedom and secularism in the name of a respect for certain culture and traditions.
- (v). We refuse to renounce our critical spirit not of fear of being accused of "Islamophobia", a wretched concept that confused criticism of Islam as a religion and significance of those who believe in it.
- (vi). We defend the universality of the freedom of expression so that a critical spirit can exist in every continent, towards each and every maltreatment and dogma.
- (vii). We appeal to democrats and free spirit in every country that twenty one century may be one of light and not dark." This document was signed by Salman Rushdie, Irshad Manji and Ayaan Hirsi Ali

who claimed that triumphs of Islamism means domination and injustice. (ibid).

Ignorance about Islam is so widespread even in the Muslim countries where people claim its following; its misperception in Europe and other Western countries is no surprise. In the 19th century, when Evangelicals were at their acme, Islam, without its knowledge, remained a target of the Christian orientalists. And yet, there seems, perceptual change in the thinking of the critics of 21st century. Earlier (in the 19th Century) the colonial powers considered their rights to thrust Christianity by force, and today, they are on the defensive. If Islam is fast spreading in the West, it is irrespective of any political pressure, behind. On the contrary, its brighter and most valued teachings attract the educated in Europe and other Western countries, joining Islam. Unfortunately there seems little identity between Islamic preaching and its practices. People who are Muslims by birth mould their knowledge of Islam under family pressure. But the converts remain knowledgeable and practice Islam with faith and devotion.

Andrew Shryock has very cleverly portrayed the Muslim settlers in the West, who remain alien to the Western culture. "Muslim", he observes, "who live as citizens in the U.S. or France or Canada are not (true citizens) by strict legal reckoning ... even ... their fellow nationals see them as outsiders. This overlap of inside and outside, are artifact of global immigration and modern regimes of citizenship, is what drives Islamophobia and infuses its missionary goal. People must be convinced and reminded that Muslim, even the ones who live here with us, as us, are really them". (P.9). This is an illogical hypothesis. Settlers in US, Canada, France or England are not alone Muslims. Jews are settlers in these countries for centuries, holding their positions in political and economic build up of these states without threatening their religious obligations or their worship places. Other communities i.e. Buddhist from China, Japan, Korea, or Hindus and Sikhs from India are far more amongst the settlers, who have

for so long kept their cultural identity without any threat to the local citizens. They also live there as them irrespective of them. Could one suggest or educate us, as to how many people from US, Canada, England, France, Germany or Italy have accepted Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism or any other religion for the last two to three centuries or since the immigration began to these countries? What was the appeal in Islam, which attracted hundreds and thousands of people, all men, women, and children embracing it with zeal and devotion, undaunted of the pressure from their own kiths and kins. Extremism of the Jihadis (the so called fundamentalists) was not born in vacuum. It was a work of the centuries of missionary activity that anti-Muslim venom was spread up, through racial and religious injustices whether in Palestine, Kashmir, Iraq or Afghanistan which turned the sufferers reactionary. This process is still in progress and the West in defence has just to be scared only of the strong reaction they are facing, with more killings around, branding it the so called fear of Islamophobia. Even in Europe, with the breakup of former Yugoslavia, the Muslim massacre in Bosnia and Herzegovina was nothing but a racial annihilation of the Muslim Turks in Eastern Europe in which Christian states were involved. What could be its consequences except creating a class of Muslims in revenge against the people who were responsible for their killings.

Shryock further observes, "The definition and defeat of Islamophobia is, at heart, a governmental agenda. Its principal concern, since the Runnemedede report, debuted in 1997, has been to facilitate the participation of Muslims minorities in non-Muslim societies, especially those of Europe and North America. Moreover, the efflorescence of this agenda after the Rushdie affair, the Gulf war, the 9/11 attacks, the Madrid and London train bombings, the Danish cartoon affair and other episodes of violent conflicts between antagonists defined as Muslim, as non-Muslim, suggests anxieties about Islamophobia" (P.7). Shryock did not include in these incident, the hundred and thousands of Muslims killings in Palestine by Israel, since her birth, particularly

after her occupation of the Bait-ul-Maqdas; the II Gulf war against Saddam, killing millions of Muslims, under a pseudo pretext of nuclear weapons, infact to take possession of the Iraqi oil; and again repeating the same repression against Afghanistan. The remedy of the problem does not lie in turning Muslims as good citizens, but in the recognition of the rights of Muslims to survive and let live in peace with the grant of freedom in Palestine and Kashmir. Meriting this small recognition by the Western countries, the terrorist movements whether in Afghanistan or elsewhere shall die a natural death. The ball is in the European court.

Shryock further suggests quoting Carl Schmitt that "politics itself is an activity based in the drawing of fundamental distinctions between enemies and friends. Muslims are enemies when they are judged to be adversaries, who intend to negate their opponents way of life and therefore must be repulsed or fought in order to preserve one's own form of existence". (P.8). This very concept of politics is absurd since there smels in it the age of Crusade. Politics is a positive activity for bettering the lot of the people within one state or between interstate activity. Muslims do live a particular way of life and defend themselves, when criticized by others, who follow a different style. Scarf for the Muslim ladies is obligatory religiously, though many unknowingly avoid it. But it is in no way challenging to the Western society. No Muslim missionary has ever suggested in the Western society that the women in European countries wear scarf. How then it comes a cause of concern to the European civilized world? Politics which makes enemies is bad politics. Feeling and desiring for others, what you feel and desire for your own self and trying to achieve it is good politics. One cannot disagree with Shryock when he suggest that "When friendship" is subordinated to the demand of sameness – whether conceived in national or human terms, it can just be coercive". (P.9)

Shryock's distinction between good Muslim and bad Muslim is interesting, however a subjective view. He observes, "The good Muslim, as a stereotype, has common features: he tends to be a sufi (ideally, one who reads Rumi) he is peaceful (and assures us that Jihad is an inner spiritual contest, not a struggle to enjoin the good and forbid the wrong through force of arms), he treats women as equal and is committed to choice in matter of Hijab wearing (and never advocates the covering of women's face); if he is a she, then she is highly educated, works outside the home, is her husband's only wife, choose her husband freely and wears hijab (if at all) only because she wants to. The good Muslim is also a pluralist (recalls fondly the ecumenical virtues of medieval Andalusia and is a champion of interfaith activism); he is politically moderate (an advocate of democracy, human rights and religious freedom, an opponent of armed conflict against U.S. and Israel): finally he is likely to be an African, South Asian, and more likely still an Indonesian or Malaysian; he is less likely to be an Arab. But as friends of good Muslims will point out, only a small proportion of Muslims are Arabs anyway." (P.10)

This long quotation from Shryock is a reflection of what the Western intelligence thinks, knows and feels about Islam and Muslims, knowing so little about the religion so often to criticize. A detailed explanation of Islam (its nature and spirit) may not be possible in this review. Here suffice to say that what Shryock is criticizing is not Islam but Muslim culture. Islam has highlighted only the principles of living. It is adopted in any culture which is developed under the geo-physical and traditional demands and norms. Hijab is only to prevent a woman from vicious human passions and stare. Doubtlessly, she is free to make a family at choice and live with in the means of resources fulfilling obligations. She is allowed dress, meals, and sociability with in the limits prescribed by religion she follows. She is a good Muslim, even if she was bred up in Europe or USA under the limitation imposed by Islam i.e. Awamir-o-Nahee (Do this, and do not do that). A Muslim in any culture cannot as a Muslim think of any

evil against the other, whether Muslim or non-Muslim except in deference. Those who do think and become activist and criminals do, not as Muslims but as bad human beings, having little sense of human virtues. They may be bad Muslims.

Shryock further adds, "Europeans long held the upperhand, and the ideological equivalence between modernity, civilization, historical progress and Western values became and remains, a hegemonic reality, Muslims can hardly ignore"(P.13). It is not true. The West had lost its cultural values much earlier, and its young generations remained frustrated, seeking some remorse and relief outside. Islam provided them solace and soothed their inner-self to some extent. The ensuing gradual conversion to a religion of peace, thus, attracted the Christian Church to propagate against Islam. The war against terrorism was only a later development. The West was infact concerned long past of some statements of the Western philosophers (Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridgment: Sommerwell: *Civilization On Trial*, and Oswald Spengler: *The Decline of the West*) who claimed that Muslim Civilization shall outlive all the rest of civilizations around the world. (I have had the honor of discussing his view point, when he (Arnold Toynbee) twice visited Pakistan, and met the faculty of History Department of the Punjab University in 1956 and 1960).

How Western ecclesiasts may be feeling about, is well imaginable. This coupled with large scale conversions in USA, Europe and England, was enough to accuse them of Islamic fundamentalism provoking Christian and Jew hatred for Muslims as a whole, taking all opportunities to cripple them, economically and politically. Shryock laments: "Contemporary Europe is filled with Muslims, a state of affairs the inhabitants of Christendom or early modern Europe, could only have equated with military defeat." (P.15). True, this was European experience in conquering the East by force or through machination, exploiting internal dissentions of the Eastern states. European were flooded in Far East, South East Asia and South Asia. Even their withdrawal

from the areas was not voluntary. The political scenario after the World War II, infact the foreign pressure, obliged them to leave the East.

And yet the neo-coloniasm was brought in the clod war during late forties of the 20th century and after the demise of Soviet Union, the uni-polar world got prepared for the New World Order, championing the cause of the countries which literally toed her global policy or could become a market of her industrial products.

The brain drain from the colonial states, even after independence, became a regular feature because of the poor education and job opportunities. The West was thus flooded with young people for better education and jobs. The multicultural societies did accommodate interaction with a choice of living on better human values which honoured with lofty ideals of both individual character, as well as his/her role in the society. The large scale conversions to Islam was personal enlightenment which gradually attracted people to its faith. Has there been another Martin Luther to being values of morality in the Western social order, may be Islamic values held in a balance. But it was not so. Shryock says: "The Mulsim presence in the West has been growing steadily for over a century through immigration and conversion, and the idea that Muslim can only be foreigners is now a position that must be vigorously argued with obvious ideological bias."(P.18). At another place he notes: "At the same time, however, the inclusion of Muslims in Western societies is a conflicting process and it too requires immense ideological effort to reverse our formulation, a generalized affection for the Muslim is what Islamophobia desires but cannot quite achieve." (ibid).

Here lies the issue. Muslims alone were not amongst the immigrants to the Western courtiers. Buddhists, Hindus, Sikh, Parsi from far East, South East Asian and South Asian countries were comparatively in much larger number than the Muslims.

Was there any cultural assimilation of these religions in the Western Society? The answer is no. It was because that their religious philosophies had little attraction or not enough appeal to experience them. Hence they never proved any challenge. The large scale conversion to Islam caused a threat to the Christian Church, less than to the ever hostile Jews. Hence, the debate on Islamophobia and Islamophilia.

Western hostility towards Muslims: A history of the Present by Tomaz Mastnak is a narrative with some explanation as to how hostility among the European Christians was developed when, in 1095 A.D. Pope Urban II launched the first Crusade. "He eliminated the ambiguities in Christian views of Muslim, and fixed the image of the Muslim at the focal point for the Christian animosities." (P.33).

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.), in his Madinite life defended his newly constituted Muslim society from the Mushrikin (infidels) of Mecca and the Jews of Khyber. But never in his life time there was any armed conflict against Christianity. There is an interaction between the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and the high papacy delegation from Yemen, but that too, ended in a settlement (Mubahila, Al-Qurran, 3:61) and the Christians having agreed to pay Jizya. But its more serious consequences were large scale conversion to Islam from Christianity. This incident also resulted in the transfer of papal centre from Yemen to Rome where the Christian priests could gather support from the Christian Kingdoms around. Tomaz rightly suggests that "Pope Urban saw his term as the age of confrontation with the Muslims. God fought the Muslims through the Christian soldiers... Fighting Muslims Christians found atonement with their God". (P.33). Tomaz adds: "At a point in History when Muslims presented no threat in any real terms to Christendom, Muslims became the enemy of Christianity and Christendom their normative, fundamental, quintessential, universal enemy". (ibid). Tomaz in a brief survey of the Crusades highlighting how enmity frengy

evolved over the passage of time against Moors and Turks, basically Muslims, and how this message of hostility created a link between Muslims and hatred for non-Muslim, altogether forgetting that love begets love and hatred, hatred. Violence is, too, a reaction against deprivation and poverty, which had been the plight of the Muslim world during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The oil rich countries of West Asia and North Africa were only dependant upon the Western technical know how for oil production. But the ensuing affluence did not make much difference as it only facilitated the living style of the people, rather than change their culture, for high ideals of social solidarity seems so wanting, not only in the Muslim world but also in Europe.

Naamah Paley the author of the Khalil Jibran International Academy: Diasporic Confrontations with an emerging Islamophobia is an interesting contribution revealing how pluralistic society with complexities of inter-racial and cultural problems, negate in Jewish interest, a positive effort of a Muslim educationist targeting its, under religions bias. Palay examine in some detail the catastrophe. He observes: "Dabbie Almontaser, as a religious Muslim, has worn hijab for her entire career with the Department of Education and her manners of dress reinforced the common assumption that KGIA would be an Islamic school. While she has never been prevented from wearing the hijab by her employers Almontaser has certainly been targeted for criticism because she wears it. Her decision to publicise her Muslim identity provoked opposition for those who believed that such a religious symbol was threatening to the American School System".(P.88). We are told that the French Muslims also faced similar problems where Muslim girls/women were banned from wearing hijab in public schools. Their right to wear a scarf was judged a threat to the integrity of public sphere as force of religious symbolism. Similarly Almontaser's hijab, according to the critics of KGIA, represented her desire to impose her private identity on the public sphere." Her hijab was emphasized and stigmatized. It gave critics the opportunity to attract her Muslim

identity, even though the teaching of Islam, as a religion, was not the intention of KGIA." (P.88) Whatever the reason behind the propaganda against KGIA, it was surprising that a Muslim lady who was bred up in USA with all her schooling and educational training with hijab on, and without any objection by her employers, on her public responsibility, her identity as a Muslims, with millions of Muslims living in USA, and threatening the very existence of the institution (KGIA) seemed against all moralities and justice, particularly of a country where human liberty is cared and freedom of thought guaranteed.

More surprisingly, France where Roman Catholic is the state religion for centuries, have, nurseries of priests and nuns, who wear a distinct dress, which is regularized all over the world. The white uniform with red scarf for nuns is usual and they are too often seen in groups at public places, without any criticism around. This is also true of Methodical churches where nuns are provided a different uniform but with a black scarf on. It is symbol of religious aptitude and signifies dignitary and honour. However, for KGIA and Almontasier, whatever had been going on was just a true reflection of Jew Islamophobia.

Part-II. The God that Failed: The Neo-Orientalism of Today's Muslim Commentators by Moustafa Bayoumi is an analytical survey of three Muslims, whose bearing up and schooling was under so-called Islamic environment without any Islamic Knowledge and spirit. Ayaan Harisi Ali, a Somalyian (a country disturbed in racial conflict) had to migrate as a child with her parents winning asylum in Neitherland. There she rose to prominence as legislator, known for her anti-immigrant views. An author of many books and conducting a film: Treatment of Women in Islam by Van Gya (The author was later on assassinated by Mohammad Bougeri). Her two books: One a Collection of Essays called the Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam (2006) and the other an autobiography: Infidel (2007). Later on she left Netherlands and settled in the USA.

Irshad Manji was born in Uganda when Idi Amin was at the helm of affair. She was only 4 years when her parents settled in Vancouver, Canada. She was bred up in an environment unfriendly and unfamiliar to Islam and she became author of *The Trouble with Islam: A Muslim Call for Reform in Her Faith*. (2003).

Raza Aslan, born in Iran in 1972, migrated to USA at the age of 7 with parents following the Khumeni Revolution in 1979. He is the author of *No god but God: The Origin, Evolution and Failure of Islam* (2005).

The above cited three critics of Islam upon whom Mustafa Bayoumi, has based his essay "The God that Failed", do not indicate whether they had, even, the elementary knowledge of Islam. They did belong to the Muslim families and belonged to the Muslim respective cultures of the land, they traditionally belonged to (Circumcision of women is practiced only in Eastern and North Western Africa but not in Semitic races Muslims of earlier period did not practice it, not even during the pre-Islamic period). The author of this essay Mustafa remarks about the three critics as "misguided or dangerous Muslims living in our midst" (P.81). And yet he adds: "Nevertheless, the fact remains that Manji, Hirsi Ali and Aslan have become some of today's most prominent explainers of 'Islam'". (ibid). This is absurd. They may be critic of their culture where they were born. But before they could really be influenced, they left it for Netherlands, Canada and U.S.A. It was infact in Christian culture they were reared up and educated, and the environmental venom against the Muslims in those countries was gradually injected in their veins and minds to make them such. Just sale of their books: 120,000, or 60,000, or 70,000, as stated by Mustafa (P.81) does not indicate that they had some knowledge of religion, perhaps not even of the Christianity, what to say of Islam. Institutions in USA such as Yale University (where Manji was a fellow), American Enterprise

Institute (where Hirsi Ali is a fellow) or CBN News (where Aslan is consultant) seems active in defending Christianity against large scales conversion to Islam in USA and engaging to popularize such literature which may be anti-Islamic.

Mustafa observes: "I should make it clear that I am not opposed to scholastic treatments of faith systems, or to even examine them through history or even within a comparative framework. But this is not what is happening here. The problem arises not when system is placed in history but when it is used to explain history." (P.84). This is true to some extent. But how does it suggests that what is happening in USA. Europe or else where or what ever the Muslims were doing any where, was Islam? It was just and only Muslim culture being practiced by them under certain geophysical and socio-economic traditions, passing from one generation to another which moulded them as such. Following of Islam is subject to the knowledge of Islamic fundamentals defined in the Holy Book and the Holy traditions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). All what the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) did was Divine. But what his followers understood of his teaching to practice them was not Devine. For, it was only limited to their individual capacity, intelligence, concentration and understanding. This is why we have different interpretations even in daily rituals obligatory upon Muslims. Islam as Din is not reflective in any Muslim culture except in shades. If that what is going around in Muslim countries be taken as Islam, it will be as many as hundred Islams around the world. Whether such a projection of Islam is just ignorance or a mischievous, anti-Muslim propaganda, is to be judged by the people of all religions themselves.

Mustafa adds: "And with Aslan, Hirsi Ali and Manji, the Grand Narrative they posit all describe a straight forward binary of a pre-modern Islam that has erracted barriers for Muslims, hindering them from entering modernity." (P.84). Pre-Modern Islam or Modern Islam are terms which are foreign to Islam. Islam is Islam neither old, primitive, ancient, modern or ultra modern.

It obliges its believers to follow a family norms with human respect for one another, and sociability without attractions to nudity and sexual engagement, under defined economic liabilities with self-articulation and initiative to fulfill the needs of life for those who are incapable or deprived.

Ijtihad in Islam over which Mustafa has taken the responsibility to discuss them did not and does not cover the whole of Islam. The whole of Islam comprises their basis: (i) Faith, (Iyman, in the Unity of God, the Prophethood, and the Day of Resurrection), (ii) Shariyat (Daily rituals, fasting, zakat, Haj etc). (iii) Socio-economic responsibilities Major part of Ijtihad is relative to part II and very nominal to part III, because part I is just faith and part III fits in every cultural and social phenomenon, provided one sticks to the major limitation ordained by God.

Ijtihad only means understanding of the teachings of Islam as provided by the Holy Qurran and the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Since scholastic experience and understanding were different, there were four to five schools and the Muslims following one of them was obligatory. The Muslims, generally, had little knowledge of Islam despite Muslims. In case there was an issue for which there appeared no clear injunction of the Holy Qurran or Sunnah, these selected clerics (Aimmah-Ijtihad) issued a Fatwa (Decree) in the light of their knowledge of Qurran and Sunnah. A couple of centuries efforts in Ijtihad, whereas solved a number of problems and socio-economic issues, some times with analogy (Qiyas), yet it created some differences of opinion, and Ijtihad was temporarily suspended. It was never stopped as claimed by Mustafa. It is still prevalent, and in some sections of Muslim, it remained actively followed, all these 15 hundred years, since the sad demise of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.).

Mustafa further observes: "The obscurant and anti-intellectual world of Islam functions as the slave system in Hirsi Ali's universe and Muslims are guilty of enslaving themselves.: (P.85). This is,

what I earlier noted; lack of knowledge in Islam and its social system. Slavery was the popular social order in Europe and Western Asia for many centuries before Islam. Islam discouraged it, not just in words, but the early converts to Islam in Mecca were mostly slaves of the rich Meccans from whom the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). repurchased them from the rich resources of his wife Khadija. They were now free Muslims except some who voluntarily stuck to the service of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) (Bilal). Similarly Islam is neither obscurantist nor anti-intellectual. On the contrary, if there is a religion which meets the challenges of times and has the capacity to mould according to the cultural demands, it is Islam and certainly it shall remain so till the Day of Resurrection. It is not anti-intellectual either. Modern West had borrowed the light of Islamic knowledge for centuries to grow in modernism, which is now slightly out of track.

'God that Failed' was a series of essays edited by Richard Crossman and contributed by some communist writers, as Arthur Koetler put it – "communism" is the incarnation of the will of History itself" (P.92). Communism did not fail God. God is Omnipotent as ever. Communism has died a natural death. It was an obsolete ideology and so it died.

Dara Deeb's: *Gender in Islamophobia and Islamophilia: The case of Shii Muslim women in Lebanon* is interesting, reflecting how Shii women under Hizbullah, have organized themselves to protect their civil religious and political rights with enlightened modernism and yet modeling them to remain within limits of Shariya. Lara has in this discourse denied the Western theory that Islamic injunction keep women deprived of civil liberties and the fruits of modernism. She has well illustrated that they are knowledgeable of religion, and yet they are devoted to perform their positive role in the society both in political ideology and in its defence against foreign accusation, Islam, and Muslim women.

Al-Dahiya, in the suburb of Beirut, is the region where Lara worked for this essay. She observes: "The entire neighbourhood (of Beirut) was destroyed in Israeli bombardment during July 2006 war. Even when wars are not being actively waged the Shii community that resides here has lived in a situation of chronic military conflict for decades: it is this community that, here, bore the brunt of the twenty two years Israeli occupation and carried most of the burden of resistance that brought that occupation to an end in 2000." (P.95).

Lara adds: "Among previous Shii Muslims living in Al-Dhya, certain expressions and cultivations of piety have converged in recent decade with particular definitions and expressions of modernity...in this case, a notion to progress in both the spiritual and material realms". (P.95). In determining the civilizational status away from backwardness or barbarism... however, it is the treatment of women bodies that determines the relative position of a culture or society as civilized" (she quotes for Jarmakin. 2008). Lara further adds: "this transnational discourse are critical to the placement of women bodies, and the evaluation of their status, at the borders between civilizational and moral constructs."(P96). Lara emphasized this vital cultural difference between Western modernism and civilizational status of Muslims, which she had been discussing with both Muslim men and women in Lebanon during her stay there for almost a decade. She adds: "the images of Islam and Muslims produced by Hizbullah activists are meant to be positive and corrective, they take the hostile views of others into account, counteracting them in way that reshaping everyday belief and practice."(P.97). In the end she pleads how the west could do away with the anti-Islamic movements, (Islamophobia) with a better understanding of Islam and is growing identity to modernism suited to Islamic ideals.

Bridging Traditions: Madrasas and their Internal Critics by Muhammad Qasim Zaman is an interesting analysis of the Madarasa – traditional Muslim education, which today are looked

upon with suspicion and skepticism as breeding 'terrorists' rather than educated Muslims. The author has concentrated only on two madrasa systems, one of Syria: Muhammad Rashid Rida, a disciple of the famous Egyptian reformer Muhammad Abduhu (d.1905). Professionally Rida was a 'Salafi Journalist and Quran Commentator.' (P.112). without being an Alim of Din, by virtue of his two publications *Al-Mannar* (A Journal) and his *Tafseer-e-Qurran*, named *Tafseer-Al-Azhar*.(P.113). Apart from Rida, he discusses in some details, the madrasa system in India, more particularly of Deoband and the *Nadwat-ul-Ulema*, Lucknow under Syed Salman Nadwi, (He is a different person from Maulana Syed Suleman Nadwi, the pupil of Maulana Shibli Naumani) and others like Zafar-ul-Islam Khan (*Milli Gazette*, Delhi). Ali Muhy-al-Din Qaradawi; Fahim Huwadi, an Islamic journalist in Egypt, and Muhammad Taqi Uthmani, Vice-President of the *Dar-ul-Ulum*, Karachi. He also mentions about a Shii alim (*Marja-i-Taqlid*) Muhammad Husayn Fazl Allah (Lebanon), and also another Shia alim from Iran Muhammad Ali Taskhiri; having joined the Taliban movement in the tribal area of Pakistan, who strived hard to bridge up the differences between the Sunnis and the Shias. (P.119).

Qasim Zaman notes all these distinguished scholars in the Muslim world who brought some intellectual systems through madrasas or seminaries. But he does not include in this system *Al-Zawiya* of Morocco and Tunis or *Al-Sanusi* of Algeria or the religious movements of Hassan-al-Banna (Egypt) and Mustafa Kamil of Turkey. Sudan, too, had similar movement which created immense impact on its political life. However, Qasim Zaman has explained in detail the *Madaris* system in South Asia in particular of Deoband (*Dar-ul-Ulum*) and Lucknow, (*Nadawat-ul-Ulema*), in the light of the great works of Manazir Ahsan Gilani. But Gilani, discussed, the contribution of the Madrasa system of education in the religio-political uplift of the Muslims of South Asia. There may not be two opinions on the fact that earlier these Muslims *madaris* of Madina, Basra, Kufa, and Baghdad, caused not

only religious understating but they created a number of Muslim scholars and encyclopedists including physical sciences, mathematics and surgery. In Central Asia, Bukhara, Hirat, and Kashghar, besides Cordova in Spain, remained centres of Muslim learning until the 18th century before Russian occupation of Central Asia, and expulsion of Muslims from Spain, earlier.

In South Asia, the Madrasa education began with the advent of the Muslims in India and lasted until the English system of education was introduced by Charles Wood in the mid nineteenth century. Even then the Madrasa system was running parallel and institution like Dal-ul-Ulum Deoband and Nadwat-ul-Ulema of Lucknow were active with new motives and ambitions, besides the MAO College, Aligarh – an institution for imparting western education, under the guidance of an English Principal.

Some sorry experiences of the Muslims, during and after the Mughal decline, to revive Muslim rule, (Shah Wali Ullah's movement and the Jihad Movement in the early 19th century having failed first in 1831, Balakot, and again in 1862 Ambela campaign) obliged them to prepare young Muslims mind for Jihad. Dar-ul-Ulum was established in 1867 by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Naunethawi, with some modest changes in the syllabi to become the most popular educational centre in the Muslim world, attracting students from other Muslim countries, particularly Turkey, Egypt and Afghanistan. The Jihad against the infidel government was still the goal. The principal of Dar-ul-Ulum, Mahmud Hassan, actively, participated in the Silken Letter conspiracy during the Pan Islamic Movement of Anwar Pasha in the second decade of the 20th century.

The Nadwat-ul-Ulema, Lucknow (Later on shifted to Azamgarh was more an intellectual movement of the Muslim learned scholars like Shibli Naumani and his colleague Maulana Suleman Nadwi who produced immense literature on Islamic learning. Maulan Shibli Naumani has to his credit using historical

methodology in compiling Muslim history, particularly of the times of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.B) and his successors. Perhaps a better and a comprehensive history of the early Muslim period has never been compiled thereafter. Maulana Shibli and his pupils, Maulana Suleman Nadwi, completed the History of Islam in another five volumes, besides the first volume on the Holy Prophet, compiled by Shibli Naumani, himself. This was a maiden attempt of the two great Muslim scholars. But no history of the Muslims written earlier was given the name of Islam, earlier or later, before this attempt. Seerat Nigari had been popular earlier too, but they were compiled under the author's name such as Seera-i-Ibne Ishaq or Ibn-e-Hasham. Other developments in historiography for the era of Pious Caliphs, the Umayyads and the Abbasids, were known by the names of their respective authors, never claiming that they had compiled history of Islam. The Western Orientalists in the mid Nineteenth century, under influence of Evangelicals began criticism against Islam, highlighting the vices of the Muslim Kings branding it in the name of Islam. Maulana Shibli's attempt and later on successive attempts by other scholars only confirmed to associate in the name of Islam all what the Muslims of any country had been doing, which is unfortunately the theme of the book, under review, too. Its contradiction today may be a gigantic effort, and yet destined to failure. Qasim Zaman rightly concludes as: "from this vantage, the perceived dichotomy between religion and secular learning, or the tension between a growing agreement to transcend this dichotomy and the lack of substantial agreement on how to do so, can itself be reviewed as a fertile ground for new ways of thinking about Islam, education and politics in their interrelationship. Anxieties about how to bridge rival traditions, and uncertainties about the sort of criticism of a neo imperialist West...that this effort would require, are all constitutive of an evolving arena of debate and contestation, which in their scope, implications and possibilities extend well beyond any dichotomous construction." (P. 133).

Part III and IV in the book contains material which to me, as may be to other readers, just manufactured assumptions. I have as such refrained from commenting upon them. Nevertheless, the book has serious thinking and provoking material, and also suggests that in Pakistan some serious and learned attempts are required to meet the challenges coming from the West.